

Reply to Office Action of November 27, 2006

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 5, 8-13 and 15-25 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the drawings, Abstract, specification and claims 5 and 8-13 are amended, claims 15-25 are added, and claims 1-4, 6, 7 and 14 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claim 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, for the reasons set forth below, claim 10 has not been rewritten in independent form at this time.

II. Restriction Requirement

Applicants maintain the traversal of the Restriction Requirement set forth in the Patent Office communication dated November 8, 2006. However, merely to expedite prosecution of the application, Applicants have cancelled non-elected claims 1-4 without prejudice or disclaimer to be pursued in continuation application(s).

III. Informalities

The Office Action objects to Figures 1 and 2, the Abstract and claims 8, 9, 11 and 12 due to informalities. It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to Figures 1 and 2 and claims

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8, 9, 11 and 12, as well as the Substitute Abstract filed herewith, are responsive to the Examiner's comments. Accordingly, the objections should be withdrawn.

IV. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 5-7, 9, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) over Figures 1-2 of the present application. Claims 6 and 7 are cancelled. The rejection, in so far as it applies to claims 5, 9, 12 and 13, is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 5 is directed to a washing machine. Independent claim 5 recites that the washing machine includes a control panel coupled to the cabinet, wherein the control panel forms a receiving space with a top plate of the cabinet, a filter case configured to receive a noise filter therein and to be installed in the receiving space, and a filter case coupling assembly configured to slidably couple the filter case to the top panel of the cabinet. Figures 1-2 of the present application neither disclose nor suggest such features, or the claimed combination of features.

Figures 1-2 of the present application disclose a washing machine including a cabinet body 2 closed on its front end by a cabinet cover 3, and on its top end by a top plate 5. A control panel 7 is positioned at a forward face of the cabinet body 2, between a top edge of the cabinet cover 3 and a lower surface of the top plate 5. An installation panel 2a is coupled to an upper edge of the cabinet body 2 and an upper edge of the cabinet cover 3, as shown in Figure 2 of the present application. The filter case 22 including a noise filter 20 is aligned with the installation panel by a guide protrusion 22a which extends from the filter case 22 and into a

guide slot 2h formed in the installation panel 2a, and then fastened in place with a set of screws S which extend through the installation panel 2a and into the filter case 22.

The control panel 7 is clearly coupled to a lower surface of the top plate 5 and an upper edge of the cabinet cover 3. Figures 1-2 of the present application neither disclose nor suggest that the control panel 7 forms a receiving space with the top plate 5, as does the control panel recited in independent claim 5, nor that the filter case 22 is installed in such a receiving space, as also recited in independent claim 5. Rather, the filter case 22 disclosed in Figures 1-2 of the present application is clearly coupled to the installation panel 2a, and is positioned in a space formed between a vertical side of the cabinet body 2 and a vertical side of the control panel 7.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 5 is not anticipated by Figures 1-2 of the present application, and thus the rejection of independent claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) over Figures 1-2 of the present application should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 9, 12 and 13 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 5, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

V. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 8, 11 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Figures 1-2 of the present application. Claim 14 is cancelled. The rejection, in so far as it applies to claims 8 and 11, is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 8 and 11 are allowable over Figures 1-2 of the present application at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 5, from which they

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depend, as well as for added features. Further, it is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to modify the washing machine disclosed in Figures 1-2 of the present application in the manner suggested in the Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8 and 11 are allowable over Figures 1-2 of the present application, and thus the rejection of claims 8 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Figures 1-2 of the present application should be withdrawn.

VI. New Claims 15-25

New claims 15-25 are added to application. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 15-25 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, and also define over the applied prior art.

VII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned, Joanna K. Mason, at the telephone number listed below.

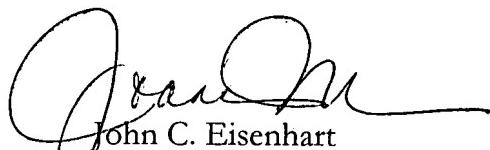
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To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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